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REMARKS

Claims 1-15 remain present in this application.

Claims 1, 5, 6 and 8 have been amended, and claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that the Examiner considers claims 3, 5, 6 and 8-13 to contain allowable subject matter. Without conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but simply to expedite prosecution of this application, it is noted that limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 3 have been incorporated into independent claim 1, and that claims 5, 6, and 8 have been rewritten into independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 5, 6 and 8, as well as their dependent claims, should all be in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

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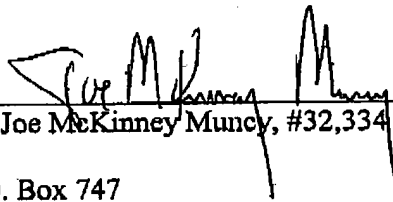
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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
Joe McKinney Muncy, #32,334

KM/asc
3722-0168P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000